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“sit down under this honeysuckle hedge,” and tell his scholar “what holy Mr. Herbert says of such days and such flowers as these,” whose spirit does not leap up within him, and, turning back the tide of two centuries, transport him, though it should be three thousand miles away, to the thatched house at Hoddesden, or to “noble Mr. Sadler’s,” on Amwell hill? The verdant meadow, where Maudlin entertained the anglers with her choice song, becomes present and visible to his imagination, and still smells as sweet as when they “were last this way a fishing.” He hears the birds in the adjoining grove renew “their friendly contention with the echo, whose dead voice seemed to live in a hollow tree, near to the brow of that primrose hill.” He lives in the company of nature, and is content with that communion. He turns aside, without one feeling of regret, from the gilded follies, the glorious bubbles, of the world and of public life, and is glad, with Sir Henry Wotton, to exclaim,

“Welcome, pure thoughts! welcome, ye silent groves!
These guests, these courts, my soul most dearly loves;
Now the winged people of the sky shall sing
My cheerful anthems to the gladsome spring;—
And if contentment be a stranger,—then
I’ll ne’er look for it but in heaven again.”

ART. III. — *Seventh Annual Report of the Secretary of the [Massachusetts] Board of Education.* Common School Journal. Boston. Vol. VI. pp. 65 – 196.

WE have already noticed, with high commendation, this excellent Report; and we now return to it, not for the purpose of giving it any further examination as a whole, but in order to consider a single topic which is incidentally brought into it, and in respect to which we are compelled to dissent from the opinions expressed by Mr. Mann. We refer to the modes of instruction pursued in schools for the education of the deaf and dumb. Of the zeal and success with which Mr. Mann has devoted himself to the cause of popular education it is unnecessary here to speak. We yield to none in the hearty appreciation of what he has already accomplished, and we bid him God speed in his future efforts.

Upon subjects which he has studied and understands we are disposed to receive his opinions with high respect, if not with implicit acquiescence. Even upon the subject of the instruction of deaf mutes, with which he is evidently not familiar, if he had based his conclusions upon any actual results attained, we should bow in silence to his verdict, however mortifying it might be to the self-love of our instructors, or injurious to the reputation and usefulness of our schools. But when we find, in a document of such general interest, emanating from such high authority, and destined for wide circulation through the country, a sentence pronounced upon the American institutions for the deaf and dumb, apparently without examination, evidently with very erroneous and defective views of their system of instruction, the effect of which will be to lower those institutions in the public estimation, and thus seriously to impair their usefulness, we cannot suffer it to pass in silence.

With the public schools and other institutions for education in Massachusetts Mr. Mann is certainly well acquainted; but there are in this State no schools for the deaf and dumb; and though in two of the adjoining States there are institutions of this class, among the largest in the world in point of numbers, and for years reputed among the most successful, all that he seems to know definitely concerning their system or their success is, that they do not teach articulation. "In Prussia, Saxony, and Holland," he finds that "the deaf and dumb, incredible as it may seem, are taught to speak with the lips and tongue"; and upon this, he judges "the schools for this class in those countries to be decidedly superior to any in this country." We have usually thought, that the superiority of an institution for education should be measured, not by what it *attempts*, but by what it *performs*. That the German schools attempt more than our own we admit; but that, in the great majority of cases, they accomplish more, we have no evidence. Mr. Mann, at least, has furnished us no *data* whatever, by which we can compare the intellectual attainments and skill in language of the pupils in those schools with those of the pupils in our own. And if, as we have good reason to believe, the German teachers of articulation sacrifice, in a great measure, the development of the intellectual and moral faculties of their pupils to an object that is, in most cases, but

very imperfectly attained, we may well doubt whether they gain as much as they lose, and whether their success in the true object of education—the unfolding of the capacities for happiness and usefulness—is as great as that of our own teachers.

Among the American instructors of the deaf and dumb, there have been men as much distinguished for talents, learning, and zeal in the cause of education, as Mr. Mann himself. It would have been the part of fairness and caution to examine thoroughly and carefully the reasons in favor, and the results, of a system which such men have deliberately sanctioned, before condemning it ; or at least, not to publish so conspicuously, and upon very slight examination, opinions which do grave injustice to them and to the scheme of instruction which they have patiently elaborated.

Though we were aware, that many erroneous notions were abroad on the subject of the instruction of deaf mutes, yet we were not prepared to find the secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, on a topic of this character, making such obvious errors as the following.

“With us, the deaf and dumb are taught to converse by means of signs made with the fingers. It is a great blessing to a deaf mute to be able to converse in the language of signs. But it is evident, that, as soon as he passes out of the circle of those who understand that language, he is helpless and hopeless as ever. The power of uttering articulate sounds, of speaking as others speak, alone restores him to society.”

The reader who happens not to be better informed will inevitably form the idea from this paragraph, that all which our institutions propose to accomplish is to teach the deaf and dumb to converse by means of “signs made with the fingers,” and that we enable them to hold social intercourse only in the circle of those who understand such signs. Small, indeed, would be the claim of the instructors to the title of benefactors of the deaf and dumb, if this were all they proposed to accomplish !

The language of signs is, in our institutions, as it necessarily is in all other seminaries for the deaf and dumb, even to a considerable extent in the German schools themselves, a *means*, but neither in our own nor in any others is it the *end* of instruction. Every deaf mute, who can find one or

more persons willing to converse with him and to learn his signs, will soon establish a dialect of gestures more or less extensive. We have met *uneducated* mutes, whose sign-dialect, their own creation, was sufficient not only for the mutual communication of wishes and wants concerning the daily avocations of the parties, for the correct execution of errands relating to common things, for directions concerning the task for the day, and an account of it when done, but even for the narration of all interesting events, not only in the circle of the deaf mutes' acquaintance, but far beyond it. No deaf mute of ordinary capacity stands in need of the lessons of an instructor to enable him to interchange familiar ideas with his more intimate companions.

When a number of deaf mutes are collected together in an institution, a sign-dialect is speedily and inevitably formed, as much superior to the previous dialect of each solitary individual, as is the copious and refined language of a highly civilized nation to the scanty vocabulary of a small horde of savages. This sign-dialect the teacher may attempt to improve, but he is rarely obliged to teach it to new comers. They learn it by intercourse with those whom they find already in the institution, as certainly as the child, who hears, learns the spoken language of those around him, and in a much shorter space of time. It is true, that the too constant use of this pantomimic language retards the acquisition of a language more universally intelligible among men; but on the other hand, it favors, to a degree conceivable only to those who have witnessed the fact, the development of the pupil's ideas, — of his moral sentiments and intellectual faculties; and it forms, in most cases, the surest and most convenient, and in many instances, the only practicable means, of defining correctly the meaning of words.

But we repeat, that, in the instruction of the deaf and dumb, the language of signs is a *means*, and not an *end*. The expansion which this language always undergoes in an institution, accompanied, as it necessarily is, by a corresponding expansion of ideas, is in itself highly advantageous, and becomes very important as a means of imparting moral and religious instruction to those deaf mutes who, from various causes, fail to make sufficient progress in written language. But instruction in the last mentioned language is, with us, the great end of all the teacher's efforts. We aim

to enable the pupils to converse *by writing* with all who can read and write; and, as a prerequisite to such conversation, to furnish them with all the stores of knowledge generally diffused among men, and which supply materials for the ordinary conversation of persons of intelligence. We aim, also, to enable them to derive from books and newspapers that solace and enjoyment which reading never fails to afford to well educated persons who are in some measure secluded from society. That our efforts are not in all cases fully successful, we admit; but we are persuaded, that, if we should spend a large portion of the period, scanty at the best, allowed to each pupil, in attempting to teach him to articulate and to read on the lips, the cases of partial failure in the far more essential, yet easier, task of teaching the vocabulary and idioms of language would be much more numerous. It has not, therefore, been through ignorance or indifference, that American instructors have neglected to teach articulation. It has been excluded from the course of instruction after careful and mature deliberation, and, in the New York institution, after actual and patient experiment; not because the object was considered of little account, but because the small degree of success usually attainable was judged to be a very inadequate compensation for that expenditure of time and labor which the teaching of articulation exacts,—for the many wearisome hours which must be spent in adjusting and readjusting the positions of the vocal organs,—in teaching the “seven sounds of the letter *a*,”—“the hundreds of elementary sounds,” as Mr. Mann says, represented by only twenty-six letters,—and the thousand capricious irregularities in the pronunciation of the same letters, or combinations of letters. To the deaf and dumb child, the acquisition of ideas, through his own language of gestures, is a task at once easy and delightful; but as words can never be to him what they are to other men, the acquisition of a language of words, whatever signs are chosen to represent them, must for him ever remain a labor that will task to the utmost his patience and his powers, and the skill and perseverance of his teacher. Why, then, should we, on a prospect of doubtful advantage, double a labor which already tasks most minds to the utmost, and not a few beyond their powers?

It is somewhat doubtful, whether, by “signs made with

the fingers," Mr. Mann meant the language of gestures, or simply the manual alphabet. Though the appellation, "language of signs," is very improperly applied to the manual alphabet, yet some people seem to have no other idea of this language than that it is a manual alphabet. Thus, the biographer of the vocalist Malibran informs us, as a proof of her uncommon memory, that she "learned the language of signs in half an hour." From the context, however, it seems probable, that Mr. Mann had confounded the manual alphabet with the language of gestures; and, indeed, many educated deaf mutes use, with their intimate acquaintances, for the sake of convenience and expedition, a dialect composed partly of gestures and partly of words spelled on the fingers. The manual alphabet is simply a mode of spelling words by means of positions of the fingers corresponding to each letter. It is available only where there is some knowledge of words, and, of course, an ability to read and write. As a mode of intercourse with his acquaintances, the educated deaf mute finds it very convenient; but when he passes out of the circle of those who understand it, he is very far from being "hopeless and helpless as ever." If writing materials can be obtained,—and he takes care to have a slate or tablet always about him,—he can converse with strangers with more or less ease, according to the skill of the one party in orthography, and of the other in the idioms of language. There are few deaf mutes of ordinary capacity, that have passed through the whole course of instruction in one of our institutions, who cannot, in this way, make themselves fully understood, wherever they have occasion to go. If writing materials are not at hand, he can write his wishes on the sand, or on the snow, or scratch them on the nearest wall or smooth stone. He can, also, on many subjects of pressing importance, make himself understood by all persons of tolerably quick perceptions, by means of natural signs; but this last faculty is possessed, often to the fullest extent, by deaf mutes who never entered the walls of an institution, or received a single lesson in written language. It is a faculty which the teacher seeks at the outset to improve, as the only means of holding intelligible communication with his pupil; but the constant exercise of which he discourages, as soon as the latter has acquired sufficient skill in written language to converse to some extent in words.

With us, we repeat, "the deaf mute is *not* taught to converse by means of signs made with the fingers." This would be, in most cases, a work of pure supererogation. But he is taught to converse by means of written words or their equivalents. When he "passes out of the circle of those who understand" *written* language, he is, indeed, hopeless and helpless as ever, except in the immensely increased resources of his own mind; but in our country, that circle is a wide one, and a deaf mute may wander far without overstepping its boundaries.

After what has been said, it can hardly be necessary to prove, that "the power of uttering articulate sounds, of speaking as others speak," is not the only condition under which the deaf mute can be restored to society; unless by *society*, we understand the companionship of those who can neither read nor write. Mr. Mann need not travel out of the city of Boston to find, if he seeks for them, illustrious instances of the erroneous character of his position.

It may be alleged, that the deaf mute who can only read and write cannot take part in a general conversation among persons who hear, but is restricted, in such society, to that conversation which may be addressed directly to him. Unless he has a ready interpreter, this is true; but as a general rule, this is just as much the case with those who have been taught to articulate, and to read on the lips. On this point, most of the cases cited by Mr. Mann fall under the old maxim, that the exception proves the rule. The notorious fact, that the deaf, however laboriously instructed, can only distinguish words on the lips of those who speak directly to them, at a small distance, in an advantageous light, and with peculiar slowness and distinctness of utterance, is not affected by rare instances of the extraordinary cultivation of this faculty, any more than the general laws of the human mind on the subject of computation with high numbers are affected by such instances as that of Zerah Colburn. Few blacksmiths can expect, by the most unwearied devotion to study in the intervals of labor, to acquire as many languages as Elihu Burritt; and only a very few deaf mutes, gifted with extraordinary power of vision and quickness of perception, will ever acquire the ability to read on the lips, even by the most painful effort of attention, more than a few strongly marked words, and those uttered by a person with

the movements of whose lips they are familiar, and who knows what words they can most readily distinguish at a distance as great as that at which ordinary conversation can readily be heard, in a dim light, or by a side-view of the face. Still fewer, if any, can learn to distinguish words in the dark by laying the finger on the lips of the other party ; though nearly all deaf mutes, whether educated or not, can converse with their more intimate associates, with more or less ease, in the dark, either, as in the case of Julia Brace, by means of signs addressed to the touch, or, as in the case of Laura Bridgeman, by distinguishing in the hollow of the hand the letters of words spelled on the fingers of another.*

Mr. Mann asserts, that he has had "abundant proof," that the deaf and dumb can be taught "to speak as others speak," "and substantially in all cases." On this point we hold him to be widely in error. His assertion contrasts strikingly with the modest statement of Kruse, himself a deaf mute and teacher in the institution at Bremen, who, on this point, thus guardedly expresses himself : — "It is *in many cases possible*, in the course of some years, to bring the deaf and dumb to such a degree of proficiency in this respect, that all who listen to them *attentively* and *patiently* will fully understand them ; and they can, also, on their part, come to understand, *in some measure*, what is said to them, by the mere movements of the mouth."† We might quote many other authorities to show, that, though in rare instances, as in the case of Habermass, — who, however, as his biographer informs us, was not deaf from birth, — deaf mutes have been taught to speak as other men speak, yet, in much the greater number of cases, their articulation is imperfect, difficult, and irksome to the speaker, and disagreeable to the hearer. But it is unnecessary to go beyond the pages of Mr. Mann's own Report for evidence to disprove his incon-

* Many of those who are called deaf and dumb are only partially deaf ; and with some of these, the sense of hearing may assist that of sight in distinguishing words uttered by others. In the case of the girl mentioned by Mr. Mann, who conversed in the dark by laying her finger on the breast of her companion, we must suppose, that the finger served as a conductor to make the voice of the latter more distinct. If this girl was entirely deaf, the case is as much out of the ordinary limits of possibility as that of those blind persons who are said to distinguish colors by the touch.

† *Der Taubstumme im uncultivirten Zustande, nebst Blicken in das Leben merkwürdiger Taubstummen. Von dem Taubstummen Otto Friedrich Kruse, Lehrer an der Bremer Taubstummen-anstalt. Bremen : 1832. p. 3.*

siderate assertion. The German teachers, from whom Mr. Mann obtains his views and arguments, admit (p. 80 of the Report), that the articulation of their pupils *may be* "wearisome, inexpressive, monotonous, or absolutely disagreeable"; and that some are "obliged to relinquish speaking, on account of being unintelligible." Of the proportion of cases in which the wearisome labor of teacher and pupil is either thus imperfectly rewarded, or quite thrown away, we may judge from the testimony of Mademoiselle Morel, an intelligent and accomplished instructress of the Royal Institution of Paris, who, a few years ago, visited several of the most celebrated schools for the deaf and dumb in Germany. In the institution at Gmund, in Würtemberg, which has been the model school for several others in the neighbouring states, out of thirty-three pupils, there were two or three who spoke with a surprising degree of correctness; about the same number proved incapable of uttering a word intelligibly; and the mass of the pupils articulated with difficulty, and often with contortions of countenance most unpleasant to the beholder, and, it is added in another place, were in general only intelligible to those who were in the daily habit of hearing them. A similar proportion of favorable and unfavorable results was found in other institutions.* It may rationally be presumed, that deaf mutes, taught to articulate thus imperfectly, when they "pass out of the circle" of those accustomed to their articulation, must become "hopeless and helpless as ever."

The German language, it may be observed, is considered decidedly better adapted to the instruction of the deaf and dumb in articulation than any other in which the experiment has been made. A few years since, an attempt was made in the institution at Paris to teach articulation to all the pupils. The experiment resulted in a signal failure, and now instruction in articulation is there given only out of school hours, and to those pupils who show a remarkable facility in its acquisition. We have already mentioned the equally unsuccessful experiment made at an early day in the institution at New York; but as that was by an inexperienced teacher, it may not be considered decisive. Articulation

* *Quatrième Circulaire de l'Institut Royal des Sourds-Muets de Paris*, pp. 54, 71. It is added, that those who cannot articulate intelligibly can still, under favorable circumstances, distinguish words on the lips.

lation has also been taught for many years in nearly all the institutions in the British isles. Of this fact Mr. Mann seems not to have been aware, or we might suppose, that, while visiting the public schools of England and Scotland, he would have inquired to what degree the instruction of the deaf and dumb in articulation had been found practicable in the English language. He says, that, "though speaking a foreign language, he was able to hold some slight conversation" with the pupils in the German schools. If we take his words in their obvious sense, the assertion appears rather marvellous ; for none of the German teachers of the deaf and dumb attempt to teach their pupils foreign languages, at least not before they have "completed half their course of instruction" ; but we suppose he only meant, that, being a foreigner, he was not perfectly master of the German language. We think, then, he would have been better able to judge of the success attained in teaching a language with which he was familiar. Concerning the success of English teachers of articulation we have some evidence. Dr. Milnor, president of the New York institution, some years ago visited several of the schools for the deaf and dumb in England, Scotland, and Ireland, and made particular inquiries as to the success attained in teaching articulation. He states, that "one of the deaf mute tutors of the institution in London seemed to understand him readily by the motions of the lips, only occasionally requiring a repetition of the words ; and that the enunciation of this person was not materially unpleasant, though by no means so easy and agreeable as that of persons generally who possess their hearing." This, be it observed, was one of the most favorable instances that could be produced in an institution ordinarily containing over two hundred pupils ; and we see, that, even in a pupil retained as an assistant teacher, whom we may therefore presume to have possessed more than common abilities, to have received more than an ordinary share of the attention of his master, and to have continued under instruction much beyond the usual time, —even with all these circumstances in his favor, the articulation was neither easy nor agreeable, and his ability to read on the lips was limited. Still, if any thing approaching to this result could be, as a general rule, attained, we should be decidedly in favor of teaching articulation. But this is not the case. In a few other instances,

the utterance was sufficiently intelligible ; but Dr. Milnor also “witnessed the attempts at speaking of some who were incapable of uttering any tones which did not grate harshly on the ear,” and was informed, that the attempt to teach articulation frequently failed altogether.*

We have met one of the most distinguished pupils of the institution in Dublin, who could articulate so as to be intelligible to his own family, but who never attempted to read on the lips. With strangers, he relied on writing ; his associates always communicated with him by means of the two-handed manual alphabet, which some of them could use with great celerity ; and with other mutes he conversed by gestures. We have seen him, at the first interview, converse readily with a family of uneducated mutes ; and though the dialect of the latter was chiefly of their own invention, and his dialect was brought from the other side of the Atlantic, he could relate at some length, in pantomime, an incident that happened to one of his schoolmates, and which was perfectly comprehended by his spectators.

The propensity to prefer gestures, when intelligible, to all other modes of intercourse, is universal among the deaf mutes of all countries ; and whenever they have become familiar with a manual alphabet, they are found to prefer it, with those who are expert in it, to articulation and reading on the lips. On this account, most of the German teachers interdict the use of the manual alphabet entirely. Perhaps this is the “*artificial* language of signs” mentioned by Mr. Mann as *prohibited* (page 81) ; for if there is, or ever was, any language that can claim to be called *natural*, pantomime is that language. As ordinarily used by the deaf and dumb, it is, indeed, nearly or quite unintelligible to strangers ; because nearly all its signs, for the sake of convenience and expedition, undergo in their hands a species of abbreviation, in which one part of an object, or one circumstance of an action, stands for the whole, and a single sign frequently represents an allegory or a metaphor illustrating some idea beyond the material world. Still, the natural character of the language, in its elements, is sufficiently proved by the fact, that not only deaf mutes brought from opposite sides of

* *Twelfth Report of the New York Institution for the Deaf and Dumb.*
p. 20.

the globe, and with sign-dialects the most diverse, can readily communicate all familiar ideas at their first meeting, but even savages from our western woods, and natives of China, have conversed intelligibly with deaf mutes in our institutions.

We know, however, that some of the German teachers do “prohibit, *as far as possible*,” — a very significant limitation, — all intercourse by even the *natural* language of signs. On this point we will quote from Kruse, whose authority, which we have already cited, we consider of great weight. Having learned to speak before losing his hearing, he subsequently attained a much greater skill in language, and a much higher degree of intellectual cultivation, than are usually attainable by the deaf and dumb from birth. He had been a teacher in two German institutions, and had visited several others. His views do not always agree with our own; but his writings show him to be more than commonly well versed in the character of the deaf and dumb, and in the true principles of the art of instructing them. On the point under consideration, he thus expresses himself.

“It is, indeed, incontrovertible, that the language of gestures is little adapted to the expression of abstract or metaphysical ideas; it is, further, not to be denied, that it opposes obstacles to that accurate mode of thinking to which the deaf and dumb should be brought; it is, finally, matter of experience, that it causes the deaf mute to neglect the use of words in his intercourse with others; but it can in no wise be prohibited or banished. *The language of pantomime is the true element of the deaf mute, in which first his spiritual life began to bud and unfold*; in which, also, he can and will receive all the ideas imparted to him. It is his *mother tongue*, which first gives him the key to open the mysteries in language and in science. It is the only and the natural means of intelligible communication between him and his teacher, without which the latter cannot operate on his pupil. It were, therefore, not merely cruel, but unnatural (*widernatürlich*), to tie the hands of the deaf and dumb, or to compel them to carry continually in the hand pencils or crayons, as is actually done in many places, or to force them, on all occasions, to express their wants orally, and read on the lips of others.” — *Der Taubstumme*, etc. p. 70.

Kruse gives biographical sketches of several of the most distinguished pupils of the German schools. We think he

oftener celebrates their skill in the language of pantomime, than their skill in articulation and reading on the lips. For instance, he informs us, that a monitress in the institution at Schleswig, though able to speak with tolerable distinctness, and to read on the lips words when uttered slowly and distinctly, was still far from being a proficient in the language of words, but was a perfect mistress of the language of gestures. We see, then, that the German teachers, even by binding the hands of their pupils, have not been able to banish the language of gestures from their schools; and it appears from the testimony of Mademoiselle Morel, whom we have already quoted, that those teachers, while decrying pantomime, do themselves make use of it, not only necessarily in the first lessons, but continually, and almost unconsciously, as an accompaniment to their oral lessons to their pupils,—thus giving to their words a significancy which they would otherwise fail to impart, and which they are in the habit of ascribing to some mysterious, self-explanatory power in speech.

Mr. Mann has placed before us (page 80) some of “the reasons which the German teachers of the deaf and dumb give for preferring the method of speaking by the voice to that of speaking by signs on the fingers, and by pantomime.” These reasons appear to have suffered in the process of translation, and require to be examined with caution, lest we do injustice to the German teachers, by charging upon them errors which are probably attributable to the haste with which the version was made.

“1. Loud speaking is the most convenient mode of intercourse, and the one most in accordance with human nature.”

Loud speaking is the most convenient mode of intercourse with persons hard of hearing; but it is, in ordinary cases, neither convenient, nor particularly pleasant. Speaking *aloud*, or vocal speech (*Lautsprache*), which is probably the idea intended, is, doubtless, under ordinary circumstances, the mode of intercourse most convenient to those who hear; but that it is not the most convenient for the deaf and dumb, nor the most in accordance with their natures, is evident from the fact we have already noticed, that even those deaf mutes who have been taught to articulate and to read on the lips prefer to use the language of pantomime with all

to whom that language is intelligible. The reason of this is obvious. In that language they express themselves and understand others without difficulty, without effort, and without fatigue; while the use of speech exacts laborious, sometimes painful, effort, both mental and physical, on the part as well of those deaf mutes who speak, as of those who read on the lips; and becomes impracticable at a distance, or in a faint light which offers no impediment to ready communication by gestures.

“2. The deaf and dumb, as well as the man possessed of all his senses, has a natural impulse to express his feelings, thoughts, &c., by sounds.”

The deaf and dumb have, indeed, in common with most animals that possess a larynx, a natural impulse to express their feelings by sounds. They laugh, cry, groan, and scream. But what bearing this fact has on the question of the expediency of teaching them to utter sounds which nature could never teach them to utter, we cannot discover. With equal truth we may observe, that the man possessed of all his senses has, as well as the deaf mute, “a natural impulse to express his feelings, thoughts, &c.,” by gestures. Would this be an argument for teaching men in general “to converse by means of signs made with the fingers”? Deschamps, a zealous advocate for teaching articulation, in the last century, gives rules for teaching a person at once deaf, dumb, and blind, to speak orally, and to distinguish words by placing the hand on the mouth of the speaker. According to Mr. Mann, Laura Bridgman actually expresses some of her thoughts by *inarticulate* sounds. This fact ought, on the principle of the argument mentioned above, to be decisive, as to the propriety of teaching her to utter *articulate* sounds. We should be pleased to learn the result of the experiment, if made. It would, very possibly, succeed as well as in the case of many deaf mutes who see.

“3. Experience has long shown, that even those who are born deaf and dumb, and still more those who have become so later in life, can attain fluency in oral expression.”

It is not true, that the deaf mutes from birth were *born dumb* more than any other children. At least, a child that could speak before the age of several months would be a

rare phenomenon. But as the expression is sufficiently intelligible, the inaccuracy is of little moment. It is of more consequence to observe, that those who, though born with the sense of hearing, lost that sense so early as to remain, or to become, really dumb, have no advantage whatever over those who were deaf from birth. On the other hand, a child who loses the sense of hearing after his ideas have become somewhat developed, and after articulation has been sufficiently impressed on his memory, usually retains through life some degree of the power of articulation, and a still greater degree of the important faculty of associating his ideas with his reminiscences of articulate sounds, and thus seldom becomes really dumb. There are, of course, among those who retain the ability to speak, very various degrees of the power of articulation ; and it is certainly, as admitted in the preceding citation, far easier to improve and preserve that faculty where it already exists, than to impart it to those who never possessed, or have entirely lost it ; for, besides that the great difficulty in teaching articulation to the deaf and dumb is in the earlier lessons, no subsequent instruction can supply that aid which the ability to conceive words as articulate sounds gives to the conception, retention, and combination of them. The instances of *facility* and *correctness* in oral expression attained by persons who were born deaf are, we believe, quite rare, even in Germany. *Fluency* may be attained without correctness, or even intelligibility.

“ 4. Experience has also shown, that, with the deaf and dumb who have acquired a facility in speaking, all subsequent instruction is more successful than with those who have been taught merely the language of signs and writing.”

Supposing the fact were as above stated, we might ask how many wearisome months, nay, years, must be spent in teaching articulation to a deaf mute, before he will acquire this important facility for subsequent instruction. The pupil must spend months in “echoing,” to borrow a phrase from Mr. Mann, “the senseless table of *a, b, c*” ; for, with the deaf and dumb, the teacher of articulation has no choice but to begin with isolated letters ; and when he proceeds to syllables, far the greater number of the first syllables taught (*pa, ba, ma, fa, po, bo, mo*, and so on) must be either unmeaning, or above the comprehension of beginners.

“How,” to quote again from Mr. Mann, “can one, who is as yet utterly incapable of appreciating the remote benefits which, in after-life, reward the acquisition of knowledge, derive any pleasure from an exercise that presents neither beauty to his eye, nor music to his ear, nor sense to his understanding?” In many cases, “a facility in speaking,” in spite of all the skill and labor of the instructor, is *never* attained; and in many more cases, the whole period allowed for the instruction of the child must be exhausted in acquiring this facility, leaving no time for that subsequent instruction which it is to make more successful. But apart from these considerations, we seriously question the fact. We think, that, even where the observation may seem true, it is a confusion of cause and effect. Of the deaf and dumb from birth, only those of remarkably quick perceptions and uncommon docility will acquire “a facility in speaking,” and with these, “subsequent instruction” is always the most successful, whether they have been taught to speak or not. On the other hand, every teacher of the deaf and dumb knows, that, in the case of those deaf mutes who retain such a recollection of sounds as to be able to employ, in their own meditations, sensations primarily received through the auditory nerves as the signs of ideas, and thus to regard written words as representatives of their reminiscences of sounds, the acquisition of a language of words is much easier than with those who do not possess this faculty of conceiving words as sounds. It is the want of this faculty, which no skill or labor can impart, where it has not been acquired through the ear, that, whatever be the method of instruction employed, constitutes *the great difficulty* in the task of teaching a language of words to the deaf and dumb. Where there are no ideas of sounds, a language of characters, representing, not ideas, but the elementary sounds of words, might reasonably be supposed, as it is found in fact to be, a most difficult and inconvenient mode of intercourse, and a very heavy burden to the memory. The teaching of articulation does not remove this difficulty (and it is the great error of the German schools to suppose that it does); for, as Mr. Mann himself correctly observes (page 77), “as the pupil has no ear, he only learns motions and vibrations, the former by the eye, the latter by the touch.” Hence, at the utmost, his ideas of words will be only ideas of these motions and

vibrations which have been called the labial and oral alphabet. Words to him will consist, not of sounds, as with men in general, — not, indeed, of distinct lines upon paper, or of obvious motions of the fingers, as with deaf mutes educated upon our system, — but of indistinct lines upon the face, and of scarcely visible movements of the vocal apparatus. That it would be greatly to the advantage of the deaf and dumb to have a mode of representing words more simple as well as more expeditious than alphabetic writing, or even than the ordinary manual alphabet, we fully believe; but the oral alphabet is not such a mode. Its characters are so fugitive, so indistinct, that, far from granting to them the power of making the deaf mute's conceptions of words possess any thing like the ease and simplicity of conceptions of sounds, many eminent teachers have denied that they were as easily conceived, retained, and combined in the mind, as are written characters used as the immediate signs of ideas. These remarks are designed, not to refute any thing Mr. Mann has advanced, for he does not appear to have investigated the philosophy of this subject, but to show the false foundation of the German notions on the subject of articulation. The limits of an article like the present will not admit of going into a full examination of this point; but we may safely appeal to experience, and challenge the teachers of articulation to produce instances of deaf mutes *from birth* instructed under their system, with whom “subsequent instruction *has been* more successful” than in the instances of Massieu, Clerc, Loring, and others whom we might name, who were never taught to utter a syllable.

“5. Loud speaking is of great use to the deaf and dumb, not only as a means of learning, but of imparting their knowledge. They learn by imparting, and thus obtain more definite ideas of what they already know.”

What are the peculiar advantages of *loud* speaking as a means of *imparting* knowledge, except, as before remarked, in the case of those who are only hard of hearing? And what knowledge is to be *acquired* by *loud* speaking, besides the knowledge that other people have sensitive ears? We may, indeed, say, that knowledge is fixed more firmly in the memory by imparting it, and that ideas often become clearer and more definite in the mental effort of placing them in-

telligibly before other minds ; * but any mode of communicating ideas, whether *loud speaking*, whispering, writing, or signs made by the fingers, may be useful as a means both of receiving and imparting knowledge. We see, therefore, no exclusive advantage that “loud speaking,” or vocal speech, possesses in this respect. It is certain, that the ideas of the deaf and dumb expand more rapidly, in other words, these persons acquire more ideas, and even more definite ideas, in a community where the language of gestures is the usual mode of communication, than under any other possible circumstances. “Loud speaking,” or, more properly, the labial and oral alphabet, may be advantageous to a deaf mute in familiarizing him by more frequent practice with the colloquial idioms of language. Whether the advantage is equal to the cost of acquiring it, is another question.

After admitting, as we have already remarked, that the articulation of the deaf and dumb may be “wearisome, monotonous, inexpressive, or absolutely disagreeable,” it is added, that “people soon become accustomed to such imperfect speech.” So do people become accustomed to converse by means of signs made with the fingers ; and we apprehend, that the latter mode of communication is, to those accustomed to it, much more agreeable than the wearisome and disagreeable speech of the deaf and dumb. In the case of a little child, its imperfect speech is far from being unpleasant, and soon perfects itself with little effort, by merely imitating the utterance of others ; but in the case of the deaf and dumb, their wearisome and disagreeable articulation usually grows continually more wearisome and disagreeable from the time they leave the care of their instructor.

“The peculiar advantages even of a low degree of acquisition are : 1. The exercise and strengthening of the lungs.”

This may be true. It is a common opinion, that the crying of children strengthens the lungs ; and the sounds which deaf mutes utter by natural impulse doubtless serve the same end.

“2. The aid it gives to the comprehension and retaining of words, as well as to the power of recalling them to the memory.”

* Mr. Mann, however, disapproves of the Lancasterian system.

It is admitted, that the *tone* in which words are uttered in earnest conversation is a very important help to the comprehension of words. Otherwise, it were difficult to conceive how the blind from birth could readily learn the meanings of words. But these tones of the voice have no existence for the deaf and dumb; and that the mere ability to articulate a word is any aid to the comprehension of that word is an idea too absurd for serious refutation. We need only refer Mr. Mann to his own account of those schools in which the entire book of Psalms in the Latin language was committed to memory, without "either teachers or children understanding a word of the language which they were prating."

It is possible, that the word "comprehension" may be an inadvertence of the translator, and that we should read *conception*. Whether the labial and oral alphabet is any advantage to the "*conception*, retention, and recalling of words," we have already briefly considered. The German teachers *do* hold it to be important in this respect; but they seem to have confounded, as we have already noticed, the power of articulating words with the conception of words as sounds. The two faculties are quite distinct, and the deaf and dumb from birth can never possess the latter.

"3. It has an extraordinary humanizing power, — the remark having been often made, and with truth, that all the deaf and dumb who have learned to speak have a far more human expression of the eye and countenance than those who have only been taught to write."

A very extraordinary power, indeed! It would be difficult to disprove a remark expressed in terms so vague, and so evidently depending on the imagination; but we much doubt, whether any one not previously possessed with the idea of the *humanizing power* of speech, would have observed this *more human expression*. If the habit of watching the motion of another's lips gives any peculiarity of expression to the *eye*, it must be an expression different from that of human beings in general. Whether articulation has any other effect on the eyes of the deaf and dumb, we leave to those skilled in the occult sciences. It is not impossible, that the habit of exercising the muscles of articulation instead of those of pantomimic expression, by favoring a fuller

development of the former set of muscles, may create a perceptible difference of expression in those deaf mutes who are taught to articulate. If this is a "more human" look, then we should expect the greatest babblers to have the most human look. Whether this "more human expression" is a sufficient equivalent for the *unhumanness* of *articulation* which usually accompanies it, to say nothing of the labor of giving this last finishing touch to the "human face divine," we leave the reader to judge.

The sixth reason, concerning the importance of reading on the lips, offers little particularly objectionable, or worthy of remark, except the assertion, that "very few of those who have intercourse with the deaf and dumb have time, means, or inclination to hold written communication with them." However this may be in Germany, few educated deaf mutes in this country experience any serious difficulty on this score.

After making all due allowances, we are unable to see any thing particularly conclusive in the reasons we have examined ; and unless Mr. Mann has stronger in reserve, we hardly think he will succeed in persuading many of the American teachers of the deaf and dumb to tie the hands of their pupils, and compel them to articulate disagreeably, and read on the lips of those who will consent to sit or stand full in the light, and speak slowly and distinctly. To do so would be, in most cases, to restrict the pupil for years to the wearisome repetition of a few familiar and hackneyed phrases ; while, when left to converse with each other in their own language of pantomime, they are perpetually exchanging incidents, opinions, and imaginations drawn from a constantly enlarging circle of material, intellectual, and moral existences. Till we can give them a mode of representing words approaching in *facility* as well as rapidity to the speech of those who hear, we must either be content to see their ideas developed far more rapidly than their knowledge of words, or restrict them for years to extreme inactivity of mind and lamentable poverty of ideas.

Mr. Mann speaks of the object of "*some* of the Trustees of the Perkins Institution for the Blind" (in petitioning for a department for the deaf and dumb), "to exchange the limited language of signs for the universal language of words." If any of the Trustees of the Perkins Institution are in possession of a "universal language of words," we

hope they will not long delay to communicate to the world so remarkable a discovery. We had imagined, that, since the confusion at Babel, such a language had ceased to exist, save in the dreams of philosophers. At least, though many of the signs used by the deaf and dumb are really *universal*, and many others nearly so, we are not aware, that a single word of any known language, whether said, sung, written, or printed, is universally intelligible among the inhabitants of this globe.

It is possible, however, that Mr. Mann has been as unsuccessful in expressing the views of the Trustees of the Perkins Institution as those of the German teachers of the deaf and dumb, and that the object to which he refers was simply to substitute, for the signs used by the deaf and dumb, the language of words most generally understood in this country. If so, we applaud that object. It is precisely the same for which all our present institutions have ever labored. Till the advocates of artificial articulation can discover some mode of enabling the deaf and dumb from birth to conceive words as sounds, the question between them and us, accurately considered, is narrowed down to the choice of an alphabet. We teach the common written alphabet; they would teach the labial and oral alphabet. Both are addressed to the eye, and both *may be* aided by sensations of the movements—in the one case, of the fingers, in the other, of the lips, tongue, and larynx. We admit, that the latter alphabet, *once well acquired*, would be, under certain circumstances, much the most convenient; but we hold that its attainment is in all cases very difficult, in many cases doubtful, and in not a few impracticable. We prefer, therefore, to teach an alphabet which can be learned with ease, which is within the capacity of all, and which is in this country almost as universally intelligible as the other.

Some of the most distinguished teachers of the deaf and dumb in this country have expressed views favorable to the teaching of articulation and reading on the lips in certain cases. Such views are set forth strongly and ably, yet with proper restrictions, in the twenty-second report of the New York institution, to which the reader may refer. We fully subscribe to the position there laid down, that, when *practicable*, the deaf and dumb should be taught to articulate. Of course, the word “practicable” limits the application to

those cases, few in number, in which the pupil gives promise of reaching a degree of proficiency that may fairly be considered an adequate compensation for the time and labor bestowed.

We admit, that *all* deaf mutes of ordinary capacity may learn to utter sounds which, *to those accustomed to hear them*, may indicate which of a limited number of ideas is intended ; but this mode of intercourse would, in many cases, be not only very disagreeable to strangers, but would, to them, be very often even less intelligible than the language of gestures. We also admit, that all may acquire the ability to read a few strongly marked words on the lips of their acquaintances. The latter, however, seldom fail to learn from the deaf mute as many of his own signs as are necessary for the ready expression of simple and familiar ideas ; and these signs being far more distinct, visible at many times the distance, and with much less light, the deaf mute will use them in preference. It is by no means true, that those, who can read even very readily on the lips of their acquaintances, can read with any ease on the lips of strangers. We may add, that to read on the lips at all, beyond a few simple phrases and familiar words, demands a thorough skill in language, which many deaf mutes can never attain under *any* system of instruction. The characters of the labial alphabet are so indistinct and fugitive, that, in very many cases, the deaf mute, even of rare quickness of perception, can only determine the word used by its connection with other words ; and hence, to use this instrument of communication readily, he must be perfectly familiar with all the ordinary forms of speech. The most remarkable instances of facility in reading on the lips have been those of persons who acquired a knowledge of language before becoming deaf.

Fortunately, public sentiment in this country does not yet demand, as it does in Germany, either that “ every respectable man or child shall sleep between two feather-beds, summer and winter,” or that all deaf mutes who are taught at all should be taught to speak, though their speech be wearisome and disagreeable ; but we should be pleased to see our institutions follow, in this respect, the example of the Royal Institution at Paris, by forming classes of those who are only partially deaf, who have retained some degree of the power of articulation, or who by uncommon docility show a facility in its acquisition. We admit, however, that the

adoption of this plan would be attended with grave inconveniences. The members of such a class in any one institution would be of very various degrees of proficiency in their other studies, and should therefore belong at the same time to other classes. Hence, their instruction in articulation should only be an extra lesson, given out of the usual school hours. This would interfere with their instruction in a mechanical trade, a great object in all our institutions. Moreover, such a step would increase, for the favored individuals, the expense of instruction, which would either demand an additional appropriation from the legislature for the benefit of a selected few, or else the means must be found by subtracting part of the allowance from the fund for the education of the rest. In either case, the distinction would be invidious, and it would not always be easy to decide, whether the cases of particular individuals fell within or without any possible rule that might be adopted in making a selection. This difficulty, it is true, would not be experienced in the case of the pupils who pay for instruction ; but these are few in number, and seldom able to meet extraordinary expense.

We may further remark, that teachers of articulation are obliged to begin while the organs of speech are still pliable, and thus to receive pupils at a much earlier age than our institutions find expedient or advantageous. It would appear, by Mr. Mann's account, that they begin before their pupils are conscious that they exhale and inhale air ; and we know, that they receive pupils at the ages of six or seven, while our own institutions do not, except in rare cases, receive any under the age of ten, and some institutions not till twelve. As six or seven years are the utmost allowed for pupils supported by legislative beneficence, and some States allow but four, it is evident, that pupils admitted at so early an age as is necessary to successful instruction in articulation must leave just when they have reached the most favorable period for mental improvement, for the learning of trades, and for the formation of moral character. Though the second point may be sufficiently cared for by their own friends, yet the cases are very few in which pupils, who leave an institution at twelve or thirteen, will possess as much accurate knowledge, or as correct and well established moral principles, as those who leave it, after an equal term of instruction, at the age of sixteen or eighteen.

On the whole, we see no present prospect, that the teaching of articulation will be introduced into our institutions at all; and that exercises in it will ever be made general, we cannot believe. Our own experience, and the still more costly experience of the Parisian school, loudly admonish us not to abandon a system which we have practised, or seen practised, for a quarter of a century, and which has been found to answer all the reasonable expectations formed from it, — to adopt a system which we believe to be founded on an erroneous philosophy, and the results of which, judging from all the evidence before us, we believe to have been, on an average at least, less favorable than the results attained under our own plan.

ART. IV. — *The Complete Poetical Works of WILLIAM WORDSWORTH*. Philadelphia: James Kay, Jr., & Brother. 8vo. 1837.

THE imaginative literature of the present century is a subject which criticism has not yet exhausted. At the period in which its great works were produced, many causes prevented them from being judged in a spirit of fairness. The acknowledgment of an author's merit depended, to a great extent, on personal and political considerations. Malignity and partisanship both warped the straight line of analysis. The numerous disquisitions which have appeared, since these passions have been somewhat allayed, have still left room for individual diversities of opinion. We have thought, that a view of the character and tendencies of the imaginative literature of the present age, in connection with the individual and poetical characters of its four great exponents, Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley, and Scott, would not be distasteful to our readers. We have selected these from the large army of contemporary poets, because in this, as in other armies, we must look to the leaders for the direction of the march and the conduct of the war. We commence with Wordsworth.

Literature has its ebb and flow, its periods of plenty and barrenness, of progress and retrogression. At one time,